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Memphis/Shelby County Tax Rates Almost Double Nashville Metro Area

Memphis, TN - Already paying the highest taxes of the largest counties in Tennessee, the citizens of Memphis and Shelby County are being suffocated by the threat of an increasing tax rate to offset government business models that don't work, and that waste money thanks to duplicated agencies and inefficiency.

"A new, unified government would cut the duplication we have with two governments. We have two of almost everything and it not only creates waste that taxpayers shoulder, but also red tape that discourages new business," said Brian Stephens, Executive Director of Rebuild Government.

Shelby County taxes are higher than those of Memphis, and we expect more increases in the coming years. Today, the highest property taxes paid in our community are \$7.21, and Nashville/Davidson County's highest tax rate is \$4.13. Below is a table comparing tax rates among the major areas in Tennessee.

| | City Taxes | County Taxes | Cumulative |
|-------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Memphis | 3.19 | 4.02 | 7.21 |
| Nashville | 3.56 | .57 | 4.13 |
| Chattanooga | 1.93 | 2.77 | 4.70 |
| Knoxville | 2.46 | 2.36 | 4.82 |

The Memphis and Shelby County Metro Charter Commission is currently preparing a charter for a new government that unifies the dual city and county governments we have now. When Nashville created a new metro government, it was about 25% smaller than Memphis with higher taxes. Today, the Nashville region continues to grow and taxes in Davidson County are 75% lower.

“We have a crisis in our midst that needs immediate attention. We cannot continue down the path or our situation will only get worse. We have to do things different and smarter. We need a more effective economic development program, and a stronger approach to job growth. A streamlined government is a major step toward a more competitive community that can fight for and win good-paying jobs,” said Rebuild Government Chairman Darrell Cobbins.

The Memphis and Shelby County Metro Charter Commission will file the new charter with the Election Commission by August 10, 2010. Memphis and Shelby County citizens will vote separately on the new charter November 2, 2010.

Rebuild Government is made up of concerned citizens who organized in 2009. The purpose of Rebuild Government is to create public awareness, engage public opinion, and foster a county-wide conversation about a new metro government. You can learn more about Rebuild Government at www.rebuildgovernment.org.

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